

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT AND
COMMUNIST POSITIONS ON MAJOR PEACE ISSUES

REF: STATE 082589

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PAPER ON GVN-COMMUNIST POSITIONS ON
MAJOR PEACE ISSUES MENTIONED REFTEL:

BEGIN TEXT:

THE FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVE OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS AND THEIR VIET CONG ASSOCIATES HAS LONG BEEN AND REMAINS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF POLITICAL CONTROL OVER THE SOUTH; THE COMMUNIST POSITIONS ARE DESIGNED TO FURTHER THIS END. THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT'S OBJECTIVE IS TO PREVENT A COMMUNIST TAKEOVER; ITS POSITIONS ARE DESIGNED ACCORDINGLY. SINCE THESE OBJECTIVES ARE IRRECONCILABLE, THERE IS LITTLE ROOM FOR COMPROMISE AND CORRESPONDINGLY LITTLE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE.

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PUT ANOTHER WAY, THE COMMUNISTS ARE ONLY INTERESTED IN

NEGOTIATING THE MODALITIES OF THEIR TAKEOVER OF SOUTH VIETNAM, WHILE THE GOVERNMENT REFUSES TO MAKE ANY CONCESSIONS WHICH WOULD PROMOTE THIS END.

IN AN IMPORTANT SENSE, THEREFORE, THE ONLY REAL ISSUE BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES IS: WHO RULES SOUTH VIETNAM? ALL OTHER QUESTIONS ARE MERELY DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THIS FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION.

WITH THIS MAJOR CAVEAT, FOLLOWING IS AN ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNIST POSITIONS ON SOME OF THE MAJOR ISSUES LEFT TO BE IMPLEMENTED OR FURTHER NEGOTIATED UNDER THE TERMS OF THE PARIS PEACE AGREEMENT:

1. CEASE-FIRE IMPLEMENTATION

THE COMMUNISTS DEMAND A THIRD CEASE-FIRE PROCLAMATION, AFTER WHICH THEY PROPOSE INSTITUTING SOME LOOSELY-DEFINED ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES.

THE GOVERNMENT MAINTAINS THAT BEFORE THERE CAN BE A REAL END TO THE SHOOTING, THERE MUST BE SOME AGREEMENT ON PROCEDURES AND EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS (E.G., PROGRESS ON DELINEATION OF AREAS OF CONTROL AND DEPLOYMENT OF JOINT AND INTERNATIONAL TRUCE SUPERVISORY TEAMS TO REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL SITES, AS SPECIFIED IN THE AGREEMENT).

ESSENTIALLY, WHAT THE COMMUNISTS PROPOSE IS A GENERALLY UNSUPERVISED CEASE-FIRE WHICH WOULD LEAVE THEM MAXIMUM FREEDOM OF MILITARY ACTION AND ACCESS TO POPULATED AREAS; WHILE THE GOVERNMENT INSISTS ON A TIGHTLY CONTROLLED CEASE-FIRE WHICH WOULD KEEP COMMUNIST FORCES RESTRICTED TO THEIR REMOTE BORDER BASES AND SPARSELY POPULATED ENCLAVES.

2. INFILTRATION

THE COMMUNISTS GENERALLY IGNORE THE PROBLEM OF INFILTRATION OF TROOPS AND WAR MATERIEL, EXCEPT TO MAKE

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FALSE CLAIMS OF U. S. VIOLATIONS. THEY LIKEWISE FAIL TO ADDRESS THE AGREEMENT'S PROHIBITION AGAINST THE USE OF LAOS AND CAMBODIA FOR AGGRESSIVE PURPOSES. THEY HAVE REFUSED ANY JOINT OR INTERNATIONAL INSPECTION OF THEIR RESUPPLY SYSTEM, UNDERSTANDABLY SO IN VIEW OF THEIR LARGE-SCALE MILITARY BUILD-UP SINCE THE CEASE-FIRE.

THE GOVERNMENT, ON THE OTHER HAND, CONSIDERS THESE

PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT TO BE VITAL, AND COMMUNIST VIOLATION OF THEM TO BE A CLEAR INDICATION OF BAD FAITH. IT SEES THE COMMUNISTS' BUILD-UP AS PRIMA FACIE EVIDENCE OF INTENT TO SEEK A MILITARY SOLUTION SHOULD THEY FAIL TO

ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVE BY OTHER MEANS.

3. PRISONER RELEASES

THE COMMUNISTS PRESS FOR THE RELEASE OF THE FICTITIOUS "200,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS" THEY ALLEGE ARE HELD BY THE GOVERNMENT, AND HAVE RECENTLY SUGGESTED THE EXCHANGE OF PERSONNEL CAPTURED SINCE THE CEASE-FIRE.

THE GOVERNMENT WAS VIGOROUS AND GENEROUS IN ITS EFFORTS TO ENSURE COMPLETION OF THE PRISONER EXCHANGES AGREED TO IN PARIS AT THE TIME THE AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED (WHICH WAS ONLY ACCOMPLISHED ON MARCH 5, 1974). SINCE THE GOVERNMENT GOT BY FAR THE WORSE END OF THESE EXCHANGES (A RATIO OF ONE PRISONER RECEIVED FOR SIX RETURNED), AND SINCE THE COMMUNISTS STILL REFUSE TO RELEASE OR ACCOUNT FOR TENS OF THOUSANDS OF GOVERNMENT MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL THEY ARE KNOWN TO HAVE CAPTURED, GOVERNMENT GENEROSITY ON THIS MATTER MAY BE APPROACHING ITS LIMIT UNLESS THE COMMUNISTS SHOW GREATER RECIPROCITY.

4. DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES

ONE OF THE COMMUNISTS' STRONGEST DEMANDS IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT INSURE "DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES" FOR THE PEOPLE, BUT THEY DO NOT ADDRESS THE QUESTION OF "DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES" IN COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED AREAS.

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THE GOVERNMENT CORRECTLY CONTENTS THAT THERE IS ALREADY A MUCH GREATER DEGREE OF POLITICAL FREEDOM IN ITS AREAS THAN IN ANY COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED AREAS. AS PART OF AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT, AND PRIOR TO ELECTIONS, IT HAS OFFERED "THE LIFTING OF ALL RESTRICTIONS ON DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES NECESSITATED BY THE STATE OF WAR."

5. NCNRC

THE COMMUNISTS VIEW THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD AS A FORM OF COALITION GOVERNMENT IN WHICH THEY AND THEIR FRIENDS WOULD BE ASSURED DOMINATION.

THE GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO MOVE FORWARD ON ESTA-

BLISHING THE NCNRC, BUT IT CONSIDERS THIS BODY TO BE
PRIMARILY A MECHANISM TO DEVELOP GROUND RULES FOR INTER-
NATIONALLY SUPERVISED ELECTIONS.

6. ELECTIONS

THE COMMUNISTS MAKE ELECTIONS CONTINGENT ON ESTABLISH-
MENT OF THEIR VERSION OF "DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES" AND
THE NCNRC, FAIL TO MENTION ANYTHING ABOUT INTERNATIONAL
SUPERVISION, AND WANT ELECTIONS TO BE ONLY FOR A CONSTI-
TUENT ASSEMBLY.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS PRESSED HARD FOR INTERNATIONALLY
SUPERVISED ELECTIONS, CONFIDENT THAT IT COULD EASILY WIN
ANY FAIR ELECTORAL TEST AGAINST THE COMMUNISTS. IT HAS
PROPOSED SEVERAL SPECIFIC TIMETABLES, INVOLVING SETTLE-
MENT OF ISSUES SUCH AS DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES AND THE NCNRC,
CULMINATING IN ELECTIONS.

ESSENTIALLY, THE COMMUNISTS ONLY WANT ELECTIONS TO
RATIFY A PRIOR POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN THEIR FAVOR; THE
GOVERNMENT WANTS ELECTIONS TO BE THE PRIMARY INSTRUMENT
FOR DETERMINING SOUTH VIET-NAM'S POLITICAL FUTURE.

END TEXT. KISSINGER

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